

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 1847 PCB PKT 05-03 High School Reform

SPONSOR(S): PreK-12 Committee

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
Orig. Comm.: PreK-12 Committee	6 Y, 2 N	Mizereck	Mizereck
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
4) _____	_____	_____	_____
5) _____	_____	_____	_____

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The "High School Reform Act" requires school districts to establish policies that include specific strategies to assist high school students to remain in school, graduate on time, and be prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. The bill also provides the opportunity for certain high school students scoring Level 1 on FCAT to choose supplemental education services, using funds as provided in the General Appropriations Act. For the purposes of this act, school grades for high schools shall be calculated to give additional weight to the learning gains of Level 1 readers. In addition, the bill establishes the High School Reform Task Force and requires a long-term plan and report from the Task Force.

The bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

The fiscal impact of the bill on local government expenditures is indeterminate. The fiscal impact on state expenditures shall be determined annually in the General Appropriations Act. Please see the Fiscal Comments section.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

Provide limited government: The bill establishes a time-limited task force, and requires school districts to adopt policies.

Empower families: The bill provides certain students with the opportunity to obtain supplemental educational services, and provides additional support to high school students to help them remain in school, graduate on time, and be prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

BACKGROUND

As a result of their February 2005 education summit, the National Governor's Association released a report entitled "Getting it Done: Ten Steps to a State Action Agenda." The response to this report from Florida's Commissioner of Education John Winn was reviewed by the committee.

The 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools released "An Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools" that points to numerous concerns about student achievement and preparation in high school, and offers five broad strategies for action. This report was reviewed by the committee.

On January 25, 2005, the PreK-12 Committee conducted a workshop on high school performance issues and received testimony from the Department of Education, the Southern Regional Education Board, and educators. Data presented in that workshop included statistics on non-promotion that show an alarming non-promotion rate in Florida's ninth grade that is consistent across years:

YEAR	GRADE 9 NON-PROMOTIONS
1998-99	37,529
1999-00	49,639
2000-01	59,434
2001-02	49,711
2002-03	51,638

EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES

District Policies

The bill requires school districts to:

1. Establish policies that address intensive reading remediation for high school students scoring below Level 3 on FCAT Reading;
2. Offer credit recovery and course scheduling to allow students to earn credit and "catch up;"
3. Notify parents of students who are in danger of not graduating;
4. Offer alternative programs; and
5. Offer summer reading institutes for rising ninth graders scoring below Level 3 on FCAT Reading.

Student Classification

The bill clarifies that students participating in a summer program immediately before or after ninth grade shall not be classified as tenth graders, or repeat ninth graders. School districts have raised this issue as artificially reducing their graduation rates.

Supplemental Educational Services

The bill provides parents of certain students the opportunity to choose supplemental educational services. Patterned after a similar provision in the federal No Child Left Behind Act, services would be offered to parents of students who:

- are low income;
- score Level 1 on FCAT Reading;
- are enrolled in non-Title I high schools; and
- are enrolled in high schools that have earned a school grade of “F” for three consecutive years.

Funds for the services would be provided from supplemental academic instruction categorical funds in an amount per student determined annually in the General Appropriations Act.

School Grades

School grades for high schools would be calculated to provide double weight to the learning gains of students scoring Level 1 on FCAT Reading in the prior year.

High School Reform Task Force

The bill creates the High School Reform Task Force. The Task Force is required to work with the Southern Regional Education Board, and will receive administrative support from the Chancellor for K-12 Public Schools and the Just Read, Florida! Office in the Department of Education. The Task Force must represent the geographic and cultural diversity of Florida’s school-age population and will be abolished upon submission of its recommendations.

The Governor shall appoint the chair and members from the following categories.

1. Two representatives from public school districts, who may be principals, school board members or superintendents, at least one of whom must work with a school with a grade of “F”
2. One high school teacher who teaches in a high school with a school grade of “F”
3. Two parents of high school students scoring Level 1 on FCAT reading, at least one of whom has a child enrolled in a school with a grade of “F”
4. One high school student
5. One teacher or administrator from a charter high school
6. Two private school teachers or administrators from any registered Florida private school that serves students in grades 9-12
7. One representative from the business community
8. Two representatives from postsecondary institutions, including, but not limited to, vocational/technical institutions, community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities
9. One expert on the subject of high school reform who does not otherwise represent the enumerated categories

In addition, The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate shall each appoint one member from their respective chambers to serve on the Task Force.

Not later than February 1, 2006, the Task Force shall recommend to the Governor and Legislature a long-term plan for improving Florida’s grade 9 retention rate, graduation rate, dropout rate, and college remediation rate and aligning high school requirements with the needs of Florida’s employers and the requirements of postsecondary institutions.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Provides a popular name.

Section 2: Creates s.1003.413, F.S., relating to high school reform.

Section 3: Creates an unnumbered section of law to establish the High School Reform Task Force.

Section 4: Provides that the bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

Please see FISCAL COMMENTS.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

Please see FISCAL COMMENTS.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on the private sector.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

Establishing the required policies should have a minimal fiscal impact on school district expenditures. Funding for summer reading institutes for rising ninth graders will be provided in the research-based reading instruction allocation within the FEFP if the allocation is established in law and included in the 2005-2006 General Appropriations Act. Funding for supplemental educational services will be provided from the supplemental academic instruction (SAI) categorical.

Assuming that the 2005-2006 GAA fully funds the research-based reading instruction allocation and SAI categorical, the remaining fiscal impact on state expenditures should also be minimal. Funding to support the High School Reform Task Force will be provided by the Department of Education and, for school district employees who participate, by their employing school district.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The bill does not require a municipality or county to spend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE & COMBINED BILL CHANGES

At its March 29, 2005, meeting the PreK-12 Committee adopted a strike-all amendment. This bill analysis reflects the proposed committee bill as amended.